THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Apart from Delhi and Mumbai Government is contemplating to modernise other metro airports and 35 non-metro airports in the country. The work on non-metro airports is proposed to be taken up and completed by the year 2010-11 with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 4662 crores.

Development of aviation sector in Uttaranchal

2262. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to develop the aviation sector in Uttaranchal from the tourism point of view in the hilly State;

(b) if so, in what manner;

(c) whether some proposals of the State Government in this regard are pending with the Centre;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when these schemes will be materialized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) owns airports at Dehradun and Pantnagar in Uttaranchal. The airport at Dehradun is being upgraded by AAI for operation of B-737/A-320 class of aircraft considering traffic potential and requirement projected by airlines. Pantnagar airport is also being upgraded for ATR-42 operation on the request of airlines. Further Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. also plans to diversify/connect to important tourist/tourism places in Uttaranchal such as Ghangharia, Hemkund Sahib etc. subject to necessary permissions.

(c) to (e) State Government of Uttaranchal had requested AAI to examine suitability for upgrading of airstrips developed by them at Pithoragarh and Gauchar. Both these airstrips were not found suitable for opeation of 20/50 seater class of aircraft due to their location and surrounding terrain.

Opposition to sell-off of public utility services

2263. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that airport unions have opposed sell-off of public utility services in the field of aviation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) and (b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) Employees Joint Forum protested against modernisation and development of Delhi and Mumbai airports through Joint Venture route and organized agitation during the period 30.01.2006 to 03.02.2006.

(c) The matter has been settled amicably and Government has constituted a tripartite Committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, AAI and AAI Employees' Joint Forum to look into the issues and proposals of modernising airports by AAI and Employees related issues including job security.

Development of Mangalore Airport

2264. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified Mangalore (Bajpe) airport for developmnt under Phase-I of the non-metro airports development programme;

(b) whether the Expression of Interest (EoI) for architectural design has been received from bidders and evaluated for the project; and

(c) by when the work on development is likely to be started by AAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The development work at Mangalore airport is proposed to be commenced in 2006-07.

Facilities at overseas IA offices

2265. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken to improve the passenger amenties at IA offices/counters at UK, USA and other major countries;

(b) whether Government have recieved complaints/suggestions in this regard form some Members of Parliament in 2005; and